

Key Quotes

Croatia becomes 28th European Union member. **"Welcome to the European Union!"** European Commission President José Manuel Barroso said. President Ivo Josipović said it was **"a great and joyful day for our homeland"**. **"This the day when we open a new chapter in the thick book of our history,"** he added (BBC Online, UK, 1/7)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-23118035>

Forged in war, ex-Yugoslav Croatia joins EU. **"We don't want Europe to stop at our borders, it must be open to other countries,"** said Croatian President Ivo Josipović (Reuters, UK, 1/7)

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/06/30/uk-croatia-eu-idUKBRE95S0GA20130630>

EU set for Serbia membership talks. The European Commission President, José Manuel Barroso, called the Serbia decision **"indeed historic"**. **"We very often use the word 'historic' in an abusive manner, but this is historic. Let's not forget what happened not so long ago in that part of Europe, with one of the most violent wars we saw - and now we will start negotiations with Serbia"** (BBC Online, UK, 28/6)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-23099379>

Summary

Challenges for Croatia

For Croatia, EU accession denotes a challenging adjustment process, writes Johan Schück in Dagens Nyheter (SE, 28/6). The country will face increased competition from the EU market, while losing its free trade with other Balkan countries. If the Croatians don't succeed with the transition, EU membership might make things worse, in a country with an already weak economy. Croatia also has problems with corruption, unemployment, and low productivity. The country's fate will be indicative for other prospective EU members. Croatians are worried that foreigners will buy all local firms whereas the old EU is worried that it has taken on another basket case economy, with a request to the IMF for aid being likely. Whereas in March the Enlargement Commissioner Štefan Füle praised Croatian MPs on the effort they had made to make the country meet EU standards for accession, today the EU ambassador says much remains to be done (Dziennik Gazeta Prawna, PO, 28/6). However Deputy Prime Minister Neven Mimica said joining the EU will boost the economy and restore investors' confidence, and stressed the judicial system and public administration already improved. (Sole 24 Ore, IT, 28/6). On a pessimistic note, civil servant Zorak Horvat asks what there is to celebrate and observes that **"we will be slaves, because we are too small to have any influence among the greats"** (bild.de, DE, 27/6)

- Dagens Nyheter, SE, 28/6, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130628/mi/item_161217613.pdf
- Dziennik Gazeta Prawna, PO, 28/6, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130628/mi/item_161226714.pdf
- Sole 24 Ore, IT, 28/6, (link not available)
- bild.de, DE, 27/6, <http://www.bild.de/qeld/wirtschaft/kroatien/kann-kroatien-wirklich-eu-krach-mit-merkel-31012838.bild.html>

Parliamentary approval but clashes in Priština

Kosovo's parliament has overwhelmingly ratified the EU-brokered agreement aimed at normalising ties with Serbia. The agreement was reached after lengthy talks between the Serbian and the Kosovar prime ministers, Ivica Dačić and Hashim Thaçi, mediated by EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton. Thaçi told lawmakers on June 27 that achieving normal relations with Serbia would be difficult and complicated but said he would pursue talks with Belgrade (rferl.org, CZ, 27/6). However, clashes broke out on Thursday in front of the parliament building in Pristina between police and some 300 Kosovo nationalists protesting against the EU-brokered deal with Serbia. Belgrade and Kosovo minority Serbs refuse to recognise the 2008 independence of Kosovo, although some 100 countries, including the United States and all but five EU member states, have done so. The plan, not yet made public, would allow some autonomy for the 40,000 ethnic Serbs living in northern Kosovo who, like Belgrade, refuse to recognise Priština's unilateral declaration of independence in 2008 (eubusiness.com, UK, 27/6)

- rferl.org, CZ, 27/6, <http://www.rferl.org/content/kosovo-protesters-clash/25029662.html>
- eubusiness.com, UK, 27/6, <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/kosovo-serbia-demo.ph3/>

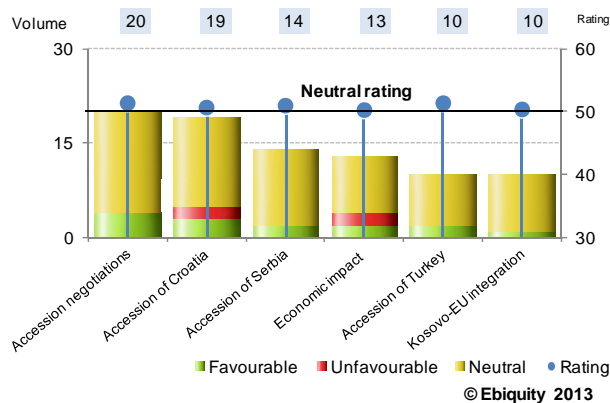
Serbia not fully satisfied with decision of German Parliament

German Chancellor, Angela Merkel said on Thursday that the first conference on Serbia's EU accession might take place in January only after confirmation in December on progress with the implementation of the Brussels agreement between Belgrade and Priština (Nepszava, HU, 28/6). EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Catherine Ashton told an EP Foreign Affairs Committee hearing that the next bilateral meeting between premiers Ivica Dačić and Hashim Thaçi would place on July 8 in Brussels (ansamed.info, IT, 27/6). **"We believe that Serbia has a place in the EU,"** said Prime Minister Ivica Dačić **"We are a factor of stability in the region"** (Kurier, AT, 28/6).

- Nepszava, HU, 28/6, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130628/mi/item_161222800.pdf
- ansamed.info, IT, 27/6, <http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/politics/2013/06/27/Serbia-Kosovo-accord-enactment-irreversible-process-8937741.html>
- Kurier, AT, 28/6, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130628/mi/item_161224255.pdf

Charts

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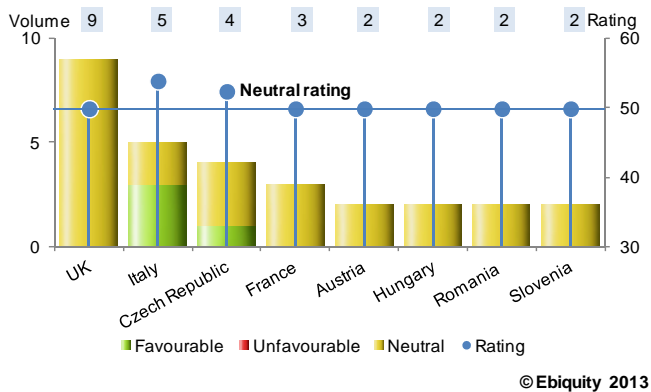


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ELARG: Leading Daily Countries
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ELARG: Key Stakeholders & Sources
by volume, favourability & rating

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Angela Merkel (Chancellor, Germany)	13
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	6
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	5
Štefan Füle (Enlargement Commissioner, EC)	4
José Manuel Barroso (President, EC)	2
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	2
Vesna Pusić (Foreign Minister, Croatia)	2
Ivo Josipović (President, Croatia)	2
Emma Bonino (Foreign Minister, Italy)	2

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